

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 20, 2003

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 12, 2003

Senate Joint Resolution

No. 6

Introduced by Senator Soto

(Principal coauthor: Senator Torlakson)

**(Coauthors: Senators Bowen, Ducheny, *Karnette*, Kuehl,
Machado, Morrow, and Romero)**

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Chavez, Diaz, Dutton, Frommer,
Koretz, Laird, Leno, Lieber, *Montanez*, and Pavley)

February 3, 2003

Senate Joint Resolution No. 6—Relative to emergency services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 6, as amended, Soto. ~~First~~ *Homeland security: First responder training.*

This measure would *make reference to homeland security expenses and call upon the Congress and the President of the United States to provide additional funding to the states for first responder training as part of homeland security funding.*

Fiscal committee: yes.

1 WHEREAS, The devastating September 11, 2001, attacks in
2 New York and Washington, D.C., changed the way our nation
3 thinks about terrorism. Those attacks, during which hundreds of
4 police officers, firefighters, and other emergency personnel died
5 (along with thousands of civilians), emphasized the need for all
6 levels of government to devote additional resources and devise

1 creative new strategies toward preventing future attacks on United
2 States soil; and

3 WHEREAS, The first line of defense in protecting life and
4 property often falls to the states and local communities; and

5 WHEREAS, Police officers and firefighters are often the first
6 to arrive at the scene of an emergency or disaster, and every day,
7 many of these dedicated “first responders” place themselves in
8 harm’s way to save the lives of countless others; and

9 WHEREAS, Hundreds of these first responders died on
10 September 11 so that thousands could live; and

11 WHEREAS, Because terrorist attacks or natural disasters could
12 strike at any time, having adequate numbers of these first
13 responders available will be critical to forestalling and minimizing
14 the potential loss of life in possible future attacks, as well as
15 meeting the challenges of other types of emergencies or natural
16 disasters; and

17 WHEREAS, Many regions of California face an acute shortage
18 of trained paramedics, who are often called upon to administer
19 sophisticated, life-saving medical care to the victims of
20 emergencies or disasters; and

21 WHEREAS, Experience has shown that by training firefighters
22 to perform as paramedics and thus providing them with additional
23 tools to assist in emergencies and disasters, the loss of life can be
24 minimized; and

25 WHEREAS, In January 2002, President George W. Bush told
26 an audience of mayors and other local government officials
27 gathered at the White House that “Your police forces, your
28 emergency medical teams, your fire fighters ... are responsible for
29 the first response on any terrorist attack, and are responsible for
30 saving lives. The first minutes or hours after an attack, are the most
31 hopeful minutes for saving lives.” The President told the local
32 officials that he wanted to commit \$3.5 billion to first responder
33 preparedness, including \$1.1 billion to train firefighters, police,
34 and emergency technicians to cope with future terrorist attacks;
35 and

36 WHEREAS, It has been the expressed desire of the Legislature
37 and Governor of the State of California to ensure that our state is
38 properly prepared and adequately staffed with trained first
39 responders, including a plan to use some of the promised federal



1 Homeland Security funds allocated to California for paramedic
2 training for firefighters; and

3 WHEREAS, The recent spending package approved by
4 Congress and signed by President Bush in February failed to
5 provide adequate funding for first responder preparedness. Even
6 though he signed the legislation, President Bush said the amount
7 of money devoted to counter-terrorism was a “disappointment”;
8 now, therefore, be it

9 *Resolved by the Senate and Assembly of the State of California,*
10 *jointly,* That the Legislature of the State of California reaffirms its
11 commitment to strengthening our cities and counties as the first
12 line of defense of our people, and to giving our firefighters the
13 training they need to provide critical care in disasters or
14 emergencies; and be it further

15 *Resolved,* That because the severe budget crisis in California
16 and other states limits the states’ ability to provide such necessary
17 training to protect citizens, the Legislature of the State of
18 California calls upon the Congress *and the President* of the United
19 States to provide badly needed additional funding to the states for
20 first responder training. Fulfilling the President’s pledge would be
21 a low-cost way to help make the homeland more secure; and be it
22 further

23 *Resolved,* That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
24 this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United
25 States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Majority
26 Leader of the Senate, and each Senator and Representative from
27 California in Congress.

